

Serial No.: 09/683,417
Attorney Docket No.: F-428

Patent

a keyed start switch used to send a decontamination start signal to the decontamination system.

27. (NEW) The mailbox of claim 26, wherein the controller includes a communications device for providing status information to a user.

28. (NEW) The mailbox of claim 26, wherein the decontamination system executes a decontamination cycle of approximately 200 to 300 degrees heat for approximately one hour.

29. (NEW) The mailbox of claim 26, wherein the decontamination system comprises at least one infrared heating element.

30. (NEW) The mailbox of claim 26, wherein the decontamination system comprises a cooling cycle.

31. (NEW) The mailbox of claim 30, wherein the decontamination system comprises peltier effect element for providing the cooling cycle.

32. (NEW) The mailbox of claim 7, wherein the decontamination system comprises a gas canister opening that includes a lock system.

33. (NEW) The mailbox of claim 7, wherein the mailbox includes a door having a lock controlled by the controller and a cooling system controlled by the controller;

the decontamination system including a heat source controlled by the controller; and the controller programmed for

executing a decontamination cycle using the heat source and then initiating the cooling system; and

polling the measurement of the temperature of the mailbox and using the temperature measurement to determine when to stop the cooling system and when to open the door lock.

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AA 34. (NEW) A decontaminating device including a decontamination chamber comprising:

a door for allowing access to the interior of the decontamination chamber;
a decontamination system operatively connected to the decontamination system and operatively connected to a controller for decontaminating mail; and
a keyed start switch used to send a decontamination start signal to the decontamination system.

Clean Version of Claims as Amended

A3 7. (Amended) A mailbox system for decontaminating mail comprising:
a door for allowing access to the interior of the mailbox;
at least two additional doors for respective access to at least two mail compartments in the mailbox; and
a decontamination system operatively connected to a controller for decontaminating mail.

8. (Amended) The mailbox of claim 7 further comprising:
a controller having a timer for controlling a decontamination cycle;
a power supply connected to the controller; and
a display connected to the controller for providing indications.

A4 17. (Amended) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein:
the decontamination system includes an ultra violet light source;
the decontamination system includes a variable frequency microwave beam source; and
the mailbox includes dividers for exposing mail pieces to ultra violet light.